

**Grace Emily Astle Frank**  
*A Life History Told In Her Own Words*

I was born in the small town of Grover in Star Valley, Lincoln County, Wyoming, on the cold winter night of February 19, 1912. I was born shortly after midnight in a big white frame house. I am the daughter of John Francis Astle Sr. and Laretta Hepworth Astle. I was welcomed by three brothers and six sisters. Myrtle was the name selected for me by my parents but shortly before I was to be named, they changed their minds and gave me the name of Grace Emily Astle. I was blessed and given my name at our LDS Church house by my father on April 7, 1912. The church house was a big white building.

We lived in Grover until I was five years old. We then moved to an old frame house on a ranch approximately three miles west of Grover.

We went sleigh riding, on top of the deep snow, down the hill near our home. It got 30 degrees below zero so we wore a scarf on our faces so they wouldn't freeze. All winter, we wore long legged underwear and long stockings to keep us warm. We went sleigh riding every day. The snow was so deep it covered up the fences. Our sleighs were home made. We sure had a lot of fun as a family.

One summer right after mother and the girls got the ironing done and the clothes put away, mother made a fire outside to burn junk. The wind started to blow from the north and the sparks from the fire blew onto the house. It burned to the ground because there was no fire engine to put it out. It burned about everything we owned – our clothes, furniture, etc. Neighbors and friends brought furniture, bedding, and clothes for us. Dad bought tents and we lived in them until a new house got built. We had a stove, table, and chairs. We had ticks made out of ticking and filled with fresh straw. We slept on them on the ground inside of the tents.

When the new house was built, we had a bathroom with hot and cold water in it. The bathroom was really special to all of us. Before having this house, we had to carry water from the spring on the north side of the house. We just had wood stoves to keep us warm. We had to carry wood in every night to fill the wood box, so there was wood for the day. It was a big wood box. We had a stove for cooking and a heater in the front room. We had no electric lights, just oil lamps.



I became an aunt when I was four years old as my brother Francis and his wife Signe had a baby girl. She was born January 17, 1916. They named her Atelia Astle. I sure thought I was a big girl.



Grace Emily Astle

I learned how to milk a cow when I was five years old. I went with the older girls on horses to take the cows to the pasture in the summer time. We had 25-30 cows. My dad, the older girls, and my two brothers milked the cows.

I was only six years old when my mother died with the flu. She passed away on Christmas Eve, 1918. My brother, Vernon, passed away with the flu a day before my mother did. That Christmas was a very sad one for all of us. I have never liked Christmas since then. No funeral was held for my mother or my brother because the whole family was sick with the flu. The grave sites were dedicated before burial. My aunt Ivy Astle came to help take care of us. She had been given a blessing and was promised that she would never get the flu if she took care of those who had the flu. She died at age 90 and had never had the flu in her life.

Spring came again and my oldest sister, Klea, took care of us. She tried to take the place of mother. Relatives and friends were very good to my family.

We had workhorses, ponies, cows, chickens, pigs, and stock animals on the ranch. We raised wild hay, alfalfa, oats, barley, and wheat. We raised a garden with peas, carrots, turnips, and potatoes. We also raised red currants and raspberries.

In the fall when the chokecherries and serviceberries were ripe, Dad and the whole family went in the big wagon, pulled by workhorses, to pick the berries. We went early in the morning to go after the berries and always took a big lunch with us. We filled milk cans with the berries and brought them back to make jelly and also bottled fruit. We worked hard but also had fun picking the fruit. It took two days for Mother and the big girls to bottle the fruit.

In the summer time we also picked gooseberries and strawberries to bottle. All the fruit we had to eat in the winter was serviceberries, dried peaches and prunes, currants, and gooseberries. Dad always bought strawberry jam and syrup. We always had plenty of chokecherry jelly too.

In the fall after the grain was harvested, Dad took wheat to Montpelier to be traded for flour. He brought enough flour back to last a year. He also bought enough sugar to last a year.

Dad also went deer hunting and elk hunting in the fall. If he got game, Mother and the girls bottled part of the meat. Dad always killed a beef and a pig for the winter too. Mother

bottled the beef and the pork had to be cured. We always had chickens to kill during the winter and also the summer. When chickens were killed in the winter, they were hung on the clothesline to freeze so they would last us most of the winter. We also had milk, eggs, cheese, and butter all of the time.

I went to school one winter in Grover. We rode in a buggy or a sleigh to go to school. My sisters drove the team of horses and we picked up other kids along the way. We took hay to feed the horses while we were in school. The horses were unhitched so they could eat and then were hitched up again when we went home from school. A potbelly stove was in my schoolroom to keep us warm. Two grades were in one room.

Mother was Primary President for years. She took us kids to Primary in the sleigh and buggy. A big ward party was held at Christmas time for the Primary. We dressed up for this. I dressed like Little Red Riding Hood. Our treat at the party was popcorn.

On my birthday, February 19, 1920, I was baptized in the Salt River in Star Valley by Martin Thompson. The water was very cold so I was wrapped in a quilt and taken to Brother Thompson's house where it was nice and warm. On the same day, I was confirmed a member of the Church by my father, John F. Astle.

Dad was not content in Star Valley after my mother died because she had lost his sweetheart. He talked about moving from Star Valley. In the spring of 1920, he went to Cache Valley, in Utah, to look for a place. He bought a house in Providence, with 20 acres of land. He came back to Star Valley and put the ranch up for sale. It was sold to Uncle Edward Hepworth and then my dad moved to Providence in June 1920.

The family moved from the ranch to a house in Grover, my grandpa Astle's house. We lived in half of the house and my uncle Gus Larsen lived in the other half. I didn't go to Cache Valley until July 1920 because I had whooping cough.

I was so tickled over the big white brick house with electric lights. There were cherry and apple trees on the lot. We had a coal stove and also a range that burned coal. This was the first time I had ever seen coal.

Dad raised alfalfa, grain, and sugar beets on the farm. I had to work in the sugar beet fields.

About two years after moving to Providence, Dad had to take the ranch in Star Valley back because Uncle Ed could not pay for it. Some of us girls had to go back there in the summer to help with the hay and grain. Dad also hired men to help with it. I had to help cook dinner for the men and our family. I was only in the fifth grade in school. My brothers, Francis and David, eventually took over the ranch there.

I was in the second grade when I first went to school in Providence. My teacher was Miss Erickson. There were 25 kids in second grade. Mrs. Larsen was my teacher when I was in

the third grade. Three of us girls were doing so well in school that we were moved to the fourth grade. The girls were Carma Checketts, Marr Bryson, and myself. My fourth grade teacher was Miss Vern Baer. She was a strict teacher but a real good one.

My fifth grade teacher was David Fuhrman and he liked us so much that he came to the sixth grade as our teacher. In seventh grade, I had Joseph Campbell. He was quite an old man. Ethan Allen was my eighth grade teacher. He was a strict teacher but played baseball with us girls. The eighth grade girls had a ball team. I played ball with them when I was in the fifth grade. We didn't have mitts. I played with Ada Frank, Anna Hansen, Olive Hansen, Millie Renner, Carma Checketts, Dorothy Baer, Wanda Mathews, Dorothy Fuhrman, and Harriet Jensen. Harriet was the pitch. We really had a lot of fun together. We played teams from Paradise, Millville, and Logan. Logan beat us. There was one girl on the Logan team that played shortstop, the same as I did. Her name was Jennie Olsen and I took to her. I played ball for three years in elementary school.



Grace Emily – Age 11

In the summer time, in the evening, the neighborhood kids came to my house on second north and Main Street to play games under the streetlight. We played kick the can, hide and seek, and run sheep run. We had a lot of fun. The kids were Frank, Harriet, Ethyl, and Dorothy Jensen, Windsor and Seth Frank, Grant, Nile, June and Areva Chugg, Ray and Clark Theurer, Agnes, Elva (my sisters), and myself.

In the wintertime, when I was in elementary school, I went along with other girls and boys bobsled riding with a team of horses. Then we went to one of our homes and had hot chili or hot cocoa along with sandwiches.

Millie Renner, Dorothy Baer, and myself took sleighs and went up to the Baer hill and rode our sleighs down. We went clear down to second west and then walked back up and did the same thing again until we were tired.

Joe Baer (my brother-in-law) raised watermelon and cantaloupe. Dorothy gave us some once in a while to eat. Joe also raised apples, peaches, apricots, raspberries, strawberries, hay, grain, etc.

When I was in the sixth grade, Dad went on an LDS mission to Austin, Texas for six months. I was upset and will never respect the bishop who gave that call to him. Then when I was in the eighth grade my dad and my sister, Arstanie, went to Texas to get a lady he met on his

mission. Her name was Clara Steen. She had three children – Edward, Ann, and Roy. Ann and Roy came to Providence with their mother. In 1926, my dad married Clara Steen.

Dad planted bush beans and Pearl, Elva, and I had to pick them. They were then sold to a canning factory in Smithfield. I sure hated that job. Dad also raised strawberries and raspberries. He hired some girls to help pick them. We got one cent a cup for picking the strawberries. We started picking early in the morning as soon as it was light. We picked until about 11 o'clock. The berries were sold for 40 cents a case.

When I was in the seventh and eighth grades, I picked strawberries, raspberries, apples, peaches, and apricots for Joe Baer. I got 3-4 cents a bushel for picking apples and 10 cents for peaches and apricots. It kept us busy to pick 50-60 bushels in a day. We had to pick the trees real good and not break any limbs either. Lots of us girls picked fruit to earn a little money.

I thinned beets and also topped them for my dad. Of course, I had to weed them too. I helped in the hay also.

I went roller skating in the pavilion on Main Street in Providence. People from all over the valley came there to skate. We also skated on the sidewalks, from first east to second west, during recess when I was in Providence Elementary. That was the only place that there were cement sidewalks.

On the last day of school when I was in the eighth grade, we all took a lunch and walked to the springs, about three miles up Providence Canyon. Our teacher went with us. All of us girls and boys that were the same age had fun together. I had a lot of fun growing up without spending a lot of money.

There were picture shows in the old pavilion on Main Street. The actors would talk while in the pictures but we had to read on the screen what they said. They also had real people in shows on the stage.

Dad built a chicken coop and raised about 500 chickens. I fed chickens and cleaned eggs all of the time I was in high school.

Dad bought two pair of silver foxes. They cost \$2,000 a pair. I then helped build pens for them. We built a fence around approximately eight acres of ground. The fence was six or eight feet high with an overhang along the top so the foxes couldn't climb the fence and get out. There were small interior fenced pens built for the foxes to live in inside the main fenced area. Soon babies were born so this increased the number of foxes. When the foxes were about two years old, they were killed and skinned for their furs. My dad made good money for a few years but then he sold all of the foxes. The fences were torn down and the land was planted into beans and raspberries again.

I went to South Cache High School for four years. I went to dances and ball games. South Cache boys played basketball and football with North Cache, Preston, and Logan High. We generally had a good team.

Carma Checketts, Millie Renner, Wanda Mathews, and myself went to the dances in Logan every Saturday night when we were in high school until we started to date. Lee Checketts took all of us.



Grace Emily Astle

I graduated from South Cache in 1930. About 80 students graduated that year.

I cleaned house, etc. for a lady up by the college for a couple of months for \$1.50 a day. I rode the train to Logan then walked eight blocks to work, then caught the train back to Providence again. It cost me 20 cents a day to ride the train.

I then got a job at the Utah Poultry for \$2.00 a day so I earned \$12.00 a week. I rode with Lorin Renner to work. He would not let me pay for the ride because he was going anyway. I worked at the Poultry until I got married. Seth also worked at the Poultry to keep an eye on me so I wouldn't fool around at noon with other fellows who worked there.

The boys played basketball with other teams in the valley at the pavilion in Providence. Seth played with Providence First Ward. They won most of the games. He also played baseball in the spring and fall with other wards.

I started to go with Seth Frank, off and on, in the summer of 1930. He had a brand new 1930 Ford Sedan. We had a lot of fun going to dances, shows, Salt Lake City, and Bear Lake. In 1931 we went steady.

Seth asked me to marry him on my front porch. He gave me a ruby ring for an engagement ring. That is what I wanted. We were engaged for about one year.

On April 16, 1932, we were married in Farmington, Utah. We stayed overnight in a hotel in Salt Lake City. We then went back to Logan and stayed in an apartment on Center Street for a month. The rent was \$50 a month. We then went to Providence and painted the old Fife home on first west and first north and lived there for a few months.



Seth Clinton & Grace Emily Frank

Seth and I were sealed to each other, along with all of our kids, in the Logan Temple on March 23, 1949. Our witnesses were my dad, John F. Astle, and Fred Jensen, brother-in-law (Seth's sister Luella's husband).

Seth hauled rock, with a team of horses, from the quarry in Providence. He worked there for two or three years in the summer time. He helped his brother, Austin, thresh grain in the fall. He then worked at the Lewiston sugar factory from about October to March for \$1.00 an hour.

We then moved to Seth's parent's house where we lived in part of the house. We had a kitchen and a

bedroom. We had to carry the water from outside and heat it for baths, etc. and then carry it back outside to empty.

We were able to use Grandma's front room for a bedroom when Laurretta, Yvonne, and Brent were born. The doctor came to the house. It cost us \$50.00 for each baby. Louis was also born in the Frank home.

Before Louis was born, I worked at the beanery where they canned beans and I earned 25 cents per hour. I went at 4:00 a.m. and got home around 1:00 p.m. Seth tended the kids, cleaned the house, etc. while I worked because he could not find a job. I also worked at a Japanese laundry in Logan for 25 cents an hour. I had to iron shirts by hand and the sheets were ironed on a mangle. I walked to and from Logan every day because we didn't have a car of our own. I worked five days a week.

Seth, some friends, and I went to a dance one night and on the way home we got in a car wreck. My nose was broken in the accident. The doctor put a cast on it and I had to wear it for about two weeks. This was while I worked at the Japanese laundry.

In 1935, Louis and Ella Frank gave us our first washing machine. I had that washer until 1958 when we moved into our new home. I cooked on a coal stove until 1958 too. I only had three washers and two stoves before 1999. We got our first refrigerator in 1942. I still have it in the basement.

Seth worked for my dad for two years while my brother, David, served a mission. He was paid \$75.00 a month. Seth ran his father's ground which was about 13 acres. He also hauled the town's milk to Bordens Milk Factory for his brother, Austin, part-time.

When Laurretta, Yvonne, Brent, and Louis were young, we went camping in Blacksmith Fork Canyon on weekends. We slept in a tent and cooked over a bonfire. We ate our meals on a



big rock by the river. Seth would go to Providence early in the morning to haul milk for Austin then come back again in the evening and stay over night. We were the only ones in the canyon that stayed overnight.

In July 1944, Seth bought a threshing machine. He threshed grain for people in Cache Valley for about four years. He worked for Anderson Lumber in the winter months.

In the 1940's, Seth and I took Grandma Frank and Lamont and Genevieve Pilkington (Seth's sister and her husband) to Yellowstone Park. We took a small trailer that had a top on like a covered wagon, food and a tent. Seth and I slept in the trailer. The others slept in the tent. During the night, bears came to the tent and tried to get in because they could smell fish and other food. The Pilkington's scared them away but the next night Grandma would not sleep in the tent so she slept in the car. Seth heard noises so he got up and looked out in the moonlight and a bear was standing on his hind legs looking in on Grandma. We stayed for four days. Seth caught fish and we cooked them over a fire. Aunt Marie Garrett tended the kids. Louis didn't want Aunt Marie to bathe him so he hid under the bed for hours but she found him and bathed him anyway.

We got our first radio in about 1940.

Effie was born in the Logan Hospital on September 8, 1944. Collene and Charlene were born in the same hospital on September 5, 1948. They cost us \$80.00; that was the doctor and hospital bill. In February, 1949, the twins were ill with pneumonia. Collene had to go to the hospital because she could not get the needed shots at home. Grandma Frank, Seth, and Laretta took care of Charlene and the other kids for a week as I had to be at the hospital.

I taught Sunday School when Effie was three years old. When the twins were four years old, I began to teach Primary and taught six year olds for about 20 years.

Each year in September, we made a trip to Brigham City to buy peaches for bottling. I bottled 108 quarts. We also went to Tremonton to pick tomatoes for bottling as our garden never produced enough to bottle. I also bottled beans, cooking them three hours as we did not have a pressure cooker. We had to cook corn four hours. It was nice to finally get a pressure cooker as it only took 20-40 minutes to bottle these vegetables.

Laretta, Yvonne, and Brent had paper routes delivering the *Herald Journal*. They passed about 150 papers all over the town of Providence. They were paid about 25 cents a paper per month. The papers were 75 cents a month per customer. The kids earned enough money to buy their own clothes and also had a little left for shows, candy, etc.

The Carlyle Bird family went with us to Yellowstone when Effie was three years old. She took her doll with and the bears got it out of the car and we never did find it. There used to be bears everywhere in the campsites. At 7 o'clock at night they would go to one place in the Park and be fed. All kinds of bear were there.



When the kids came down with childhood diseases such as chickenpox, scarlet fever, whooping cough, measles, etc. we were quarantined and a sign was posted on the house. This meant no visitors were allowed and no one (except parents) could leave the house either for about four weeks. Brent got chickenpox and I didn't know what it was so he kept going to school. We soon found out what he had as a lot of kids in his class came down with chicken pox and so did mine.

In 1948, we decided to see if we could buy a farm somewhere. We found about 80 acres of land in Mendon. Most of it had to be irrigated. The house had to be remodeled so Seth and I went to Mendon in the evenings and worked until about 2 o'clock in the morning. Lauretta and Yvonne had to tend the family. We moved to this house in June 1949.

In Mendon, we heated our water for the washer on the stove. I always put the clothes through the washer twice then rinsed them in two tubs of water before hanging them on the lines. When the washing was done, the water was carried outside to empty it. We had hot water in the house but it didn't get hot enough for the second time through the washer.

We had a big garden in Mendon and also raised strawberries. Brent and I picked raspberries for a Mrs. Baker. For our pay, we received half of the raspberries we picked instead of cash. We always had plenty of berries for bottling.

We were living in Mendon when we got our first television. It was in about 1956. We bought our first color TV in 1965 just after they came on the market.

Seth continued to work at Anderson Lumber. Brent and I irrigated the crops in the daytime but Seth and I did it at night when it was our turn. We raised sugar beets, hay, and grain. We also milked about a dozen cows. The boys took the cows to the pasture about a mile from home. The kids helped in the fields weeding beets, hauling hay and peas plus the grain. Seth bought a combine so we could harvest our own grain. I tied sacks of grain on the combine since it had a sacker rather than a bin for bulk grain.

We operated the farm until 1957. We then sold it and moved back to Providence. We lived in the old Frank home until April 1958. We then moved into the new home that Seth and the family built. This is the home located at 65 West Center in Providence.

In 1959 we made another trip to Yellowstone Park. Sandra Kidman went with us. She was dating Brent at the time. She had never camped in a tent or cooked on a bonfire before so this was a new experience for her.

After moving back to Providence, I was I the Relief Society presidency for four years. I also spent a good deal of time on different committees planning old folks dinners for those who were 60 years old and older and also annual bazaars and sauerkraut/turkey dinners. At these sauerkraut/turkey dinners, we served about 1,000 people in one night. People came from as far away as Salt Lake to these dinners.

Ward members furnished everything for the dinners. Turkey was always served along with potatoes, gravy, jello salad, cranberries, sauerkraut, yams, homemade hot rolls, and pies, etc.

Pillowcases, aprons, dishtowels, quilts, etc. were sold at the bazaars. Quilts were sold for \$65.00 each, pillow cases for \$3.50, dish towels for about \$2.00, and dish towels for \$1.50 to \$3.00 per set of seven.

Candy, date pudding, noodles, and other food items were sold at the bazaars too. These were all homemade. It was an all-day job making the noodles. Vada Checketts always brought a chicken the day we made noodles so we could have chicken noodle soup for lunch – was delicious.



Grace Emily Frank – Age 80

The Relief Society also cooked suppers for the Lions Club and also other clubs. Of course, these people paid for their suppers. In those days, the Relief society had to make their own money to run the organization. Every year about \$1,000 was given to the bishop and the Relief Society still had enough money left for their needs.

In the spring of 1966, Seth and I went on a trip to California with Brent and Sandra. On March 8, we were at a motel in Petaluma, California, when Seth had a heart attack and passed away. It was approximately 5:00 p.m. After arrangements were made for the body to be shipped to Logan, we came immediately back to Providence to take care of funeral arrangements. Seth's funeral was held at the Providence First Ward Chapel on March 12 and he was buried in the Providence Cemetery. There was some snow on the ground at that time but on the day of the funeral it was a beautiful day.

After Seth's passing, I worked as a sales clerk for about two years at a store in Logan. I then worked as a cook in Providence Elementary School for nine years. I retired from that position in 1977.

A new church house was built on the Jacob Frederick property in about 1969. Providence First Ward was divided into two wards but I remained in the First Ward. Kenneth Spuhler was our bishop.

## My Family

### Children's Schooling:

When we moved to Mendon, Brent was in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and Louis was in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade. They both went to the elementary school in Mendon; Brent only went there for one year. Lauretta and Yvonne were both at South Cache High School. When we moved back to Providence about eight years later, Lauretta, Yvonne, Brent, and Louis had all graduated from high school. Effie was in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade and the twins in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Effie graduated from South Cache and Collene and Charlene graduated from Sky View in Smithfield in 1966.

Lauretta attended Utah State for one year and Yvonne went for two years. Brent graduated from college in June 1958. Louis attended college for one year at Utah State. Effie went to the St. Marks School of Nursing in Salt Lake and graduated with a nursing degree in June 1965. Collene graduated from LDS Business College in Salt Lake. Charlene graduated from Utah State University in 1970. Charlene then served a mission in Uruguay and returned home in 1972.

### Children's Marriages:

Lauretta married Doyle B. Tanner in the Logan Temple on January 7, 1952.

Louis married Oralee Gunnell in the Logan Temple on August 1, 1958.

Yvonne married Bill Wright in the Salt Lake Temple on January 23, 1959.

Brent married Sandra Lee Kidman in the Logan Temple on July 29, 1960.

Effie married Louis Wilhelm in the Salt Lake Temple on August 30, 1968.

Collene married Tom Ashe in the Logan Temple on April 14, 1972.

Charlene married Wayne Knighton in the Logan Temple on April 26, 1974.



Grace Emily Frank – Age 88

*Grace Emily Astle Frank passed away September 17, 2003 at the age of 91. She was buried September 22, 2003 in the Providence, Utah Cemetery.*